

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LISBON 06737 131252Z

50

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 SAM-01 AF-06 OPIC-03 OMB-01

EURE-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00

SIL-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 SCS-03 CU-02

MC-02 /051 W

----- 121377

O R 131144Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4953

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 6737

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO, PINS, MILI

SUBJ: COMMUNIST-LED CONSTRUCTION WORKERS BESIEGE GOVERNMENT

REFS: (A) LISBON 6626 DTG 081403Z NOV 75

SUMMARY: COMMUNIST-LED CONSTRUCTION WORKERS HAVE LAID SEIGE TO
SAO BENTO PALACE AND ADJACENT PRIME MINISTER'S RESIDENCE, REFUSING
TO ALLOW CONSTITUTE ASSEMBLY DELEGATES INSIDE
TO DEPART UNTIL WORKER'S DEMANDS ARE MET. AS OF 11:00 A.M.
LOCAL NOV 13, SOME 5,000-10,000 WORKERS REMAINED ON PREMISES.
OPTIONS OPEN TO GOVERNMENT ARE FEW, BUT PRESIDENCY IS REPORTEDLY
CONTEMPLATING USE OF FORCE. END SUMMARY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LISBON 06737 131252Z

1. CONSTRUCTION WORKERS DEMONSTRATION: PCP-LED CIVIL CONSTRUCTIONS WORKERS' DEMONSTRATION IN DOWNTON LISBON AFTERNOON OF NOV 12 HAS DEVELOPED INTO MAJOR CHALLENGE TO AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT. FINDING LABOR MINISTRY CLOSED IN ANTICIPATION OF THEIR VISIT, ESTIMATED 15-20,000 DEMONSTRATORS PROCEEDED TO SAO BENTO PALACE WHERE THEY HOPED TO FIND COUNCIL OF MINISTERS IN SESSION. INSTEAD THEY FOUND CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY DELEGATES AND PRIME MINISTER AZEVEDO. DEMONSTRATORS SURROUNDED SAO BENTO AND ADJACENT RESIDENCE OF PRIME MINISTER AND DEMANDED IMMEDIATE APPROVAL OF NEW COLLECTIVE CONTRACT WITH HIGHER WAGE SCALES AS PRICE FOR LIFTING SEIGE. COMMUNIST (PCP) AND FELLOW-TRAVELLING POPULAR DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (MDP) DELEGATES WERE ALLOWED TO LEAVE BUILDING DURING EARLY MORNING HOURS NOV 13, BUT NO ONE ELSE WAS PERMITTED TO ENTER OR DEPART. SOCIALIST PARTY LEADER SOARES DEPARTED BEFORE DEMONSTRATORS ARRIVED AND WAS NOT ALLOWED TO RETURN. AS OF 11 AM LOCAL NOV 13, SITUATION REMAINS STABLE WITH 5-10,000 DEMONSTRATORS SURROUNDING SAO BENTO AND ENTRANCE TO PRIME MINISTER'S RESIDENCE BLOCKED BY HEAVY CONSTRUCTION VEHICLES.

2. AZEVEDO LEADS TALKS: PRIME MINISTER HAS TAKEN PERSONAL CHARGE OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF WORKERS. ALTHOUGH AZEVEDO HAS SHOWN DISPOSITION TO COMPROMISE-- OFFERING TO ACCEPT DECISION OF MIXED COMMISSION INCLUDING MEMBERS ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH WORKERS AND GOVERNMENT--HE HAS TOLD WORKERS HE WILL NOT CEDE TO FORCE.

3. RC MILITARY COMMITTEE MEETS: MEANWHILE AT PRESIDENTIAL PALACE, MILITARY COMMITTEE OF REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (RC), INCLUDING THREE SERVICE CHIEFS, TWO OF THREE MILITARY REGION COMMANDERS OUTSIDE LISBON, AND COPCON COMMANDER CARVALHO, BEGAN MEETING AT 6:00 PM NOV 12. MEETING BROKE UP EARLY MORNING NOV 13 WITH RESULTS NOT REPORTED.

4. PCP OFFENSIVE: COMMUNISTS HAVE SEIZED UPON DEMONSTRATION TO STEP UP THEIR OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT.

--PCP STATEMENT: PCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE RELEASED STATEMENT NOV 13 ASSERTING THAT "STRENGTHENING OF THE RIGHTIST TENDENCIES OF THE GOVERNMENT IS COMPROMISING THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING CLASSES."
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LISBON 06737 131252Z

PCP POINTED TO NOV 9 PRO-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATION IN LISBON, EMERGENCY ECONOMIC PLAN, AND COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HOSTILITY TO RECOGNITION OF MPLA IN ANGOLA AS EVIDENCE OF RAMPANT RIGHTIST INFLUENCE IN GOVERNMENT. PCP SAID THAT RECENT LABOR ACTIVITY, INCLUDING CIVIL CONSTRUCTION WORKERS STRIKE, DEMONSTRATED INCREASING GRASSROOTS OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT. COMMUNISTS REITERATED CALL FOR "UNITY OF PROGRESSIVE FORCES" AND FOR STRENGTHENING OF THE LEFT IN MILITARY AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

AS ONLY MEANS OF RESOLVING CURRENT CRISIS.

--DEMONSTRATION SCHEDULED: PCP-DOMINATED WORKERS COMMITTEES OF LISBON INDUSTRIAL BELT CALLED FOR POPULAR UNITARY DEMONSTRATION NOV 16 AGAINST "RIGHTIST OFFENSIVE AND COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY TERRORISM". PCP IS FORMALLY SUPPORTING EFFORT.

--ALLEGED COUP PLAN: GROUP IDENTIFYING ITSELF AS COMMISSION FOR REVOLUTIONARY VIGILANCE IN THE NORTH (CVRN) ISSUED COMMUNIQUE NOV 12 ALLEGING THAT "REACTIONARY" OFFICERS OF NORTHERN MILITARY REGION PLANNED TO LAUNCH COUP IN NEAR FUTURE, MARCHING SOUTH AGAINST LEFTIST CENTERS IN LISBON AND ALENTEJO. GROUP CALLED ON SOLDIERS TO REMAIN IN BARRACKS WITHOUT KNOWING PURPOSE OF MISSION.

--SDCI ATTACKS "GROUP OF NINE" SUPPORTERS: GOP INTELLIGENCE SERVICE (SDCI), WHICH IS HEADED BY COMMUNIST-SYMPATHIZER, LCDR ALMADA CONTREIRAS, LABELED FALSE AND SHAMEFUL THE CHARGE OF SINGLE MILITARY FRONT (FMU) THAT SCI HAD SOUGHT TO COMPROMISE THE "NINE'S" MAJ CANTO E CASTRO DURING THE ARREST OF SPINOLA ASSOCIATES IN BRAGA (REF A).

5. MORE VIOLENCE: PCP ASSERTIONS OF PLOTTING BY COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY FORCES WERE FURTHER FUELED BY NOV 12 BOMBINGS AND VIOLENCE AGAINST LEFTIST TARGETS:

--OPORTO: BOMB DESTROYED SHOP OF PCP MEMBER IN EARLY MORNING HOURS.

--FAMALICAO: PCP OFFICES, WHICH HAD RECENTLY BEEN REOPENED AFTER AUGUST SACKING AND BURNING, WAS TARGET OF BOMB CAUSING MINOR DAMAGE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 LISBON 06737 131252Z

--LISBON: "MOLOTOV COCKTAIL" THROWN INTO LEFTIST NEWSPAPER "A REPUBLICA" CAUSED NO SERIOUS DAMAGE.

6. COMMENT: WE ARE IN MIDST OF ANOTHER CRISIS. THE UNANTICIPATED SUCCESS OF THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS DEMONSTRATION HAS LED TO A FLURRY OF PCP ACTIVITY TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE SITUATION. REPORTS, STILL UNCONFIRMED, THAT ADDITIONAL WORKERS MAY BE TRUCKED IN LATER TODAY FROM PCP-DOMINATED RURAL UNIONS IN THE ALENTEJO, INDICATE THAT PCP INTENDS TO INCREASE THE PRESSURE. SHOULD AZEVEDO MAKE A FALSE STEP IN THE CURRENT TENSE ATMOSPHERE, THE PCP COULD BE EMBOLDENED TO PULL OUT ALL THE STOPS IN ITS EFFORTS TO TOPPLE THE GOVERNMENT.

7. THE OPTIONS OPEN TO THE GOVERNMENT ARE FEW.
PRESIDENTIAL AIDE MAJ CALDAS TOLD DATT AT 11:30 LOCAL TODAY

(NOV 13) THAT PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER AND SOME MEMBERS
OF GOVERNMENT HAD DETERMINED THAT "IMMEDIATE ACTION" WOULD
BE UNDERTAKEN TO LIBERATE THOSE TRAPPED INSIDE SAO BENTO. ASKED
IF TROOPS WOULD BE USED, THE HEDGED, SAYING THAT SINCE ACTION
WAS TO BE TAKEN "IMMEDIATELY" HE ASSUMED THAT TROOPS WOULD BE
USED. HE HAD NO IDEA WHAT FORCES WOULD BE EMPLOYED. THE
COMMUNISTS FOR THEIR PART, CAN BE EXPECTED TO PRESS THEIR
CURRENT ADVANTAGE. SOCIALISTS AND PPD ARE NOW PREPARING COUNTER-
DEMONSTRATION AT PRESIDENTIAL PALACE.
CARLUCCI

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL STABILITY, GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, COMMUNISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 NOV 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LISBON06737
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DG ALTERED PER 78 LISBON 634
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750395-0574
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751147/aaaabpko.tel
Line Count: 179
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LISBON 6626
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 MAY 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <15 OCT 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COMMUNIST LED CONSTRUCTION WORKERS BESIEGE GOVERNMENT
TAGS: PINT, PINS, MILI, ELAB, PO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006